

Honored Army major gets the bugs out

By ALISON WALKER-BAIRD

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FREDERICK — Army Maj. Wilson Ariza returned home from an award ceremony last week and hung his hard-earned gold medal around the neck of his 7-year-old daughter Kimberly.

**Slice
OF Life**

George Washington University and the

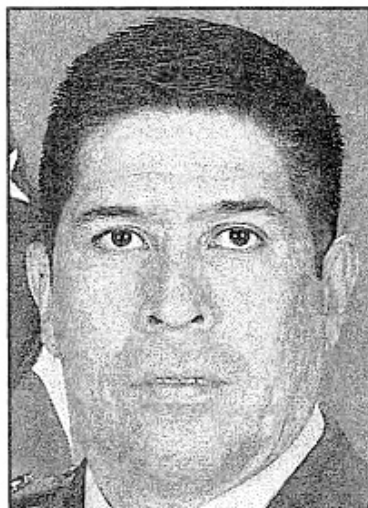
Arthur S. Flemming Awards Commission presented Maj. Ariza and 10 other federal government staffers with the Arthur S. Flemming Award for outstanding service. Past recipients have included Neil Armstrong and Elizabeth Dole.

Maj. Ariza — nicknamed “Mr. TDY” for his frequent temporary deploy-

ments — has been in the Army since 1989 and has traveled to Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, Kuwait and Korea.

He is assistant product manager for Medical Communications for Combat Casualty Care, headquartered at Fort Detrick. The MC4 system creates a life-long electronic medical record of a service member's care from battlefield to hospital. It helps reduce redundant treatment and medication, which could be lethal. Nurses or physicians enter data on a handheld device, which stores in the information in a secure, central repository.

Using his background in computer engineering and master's degrees in information management and hospital administration, Maj. Ariza supervises the technical aspects of deploying the technology, making sure it works and fixing any “bugs.”



Major Wilson Ariza

Maj. Ariza also teaches a course in medical operations in the battlefield several times each year at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda.

He was named Officer of the Year

in 2002 at Fort Hood, Texas, where he helped automate health care information for medical, dental and veterinary programs.

Maj. Ariza remains grounded about his success, saying that his wife Nitza and daughters Kimberly and Elizabeth, 3, have been his biggest supporters.

“I’ve been able to do this because I have a great spouse — she takes care of everything at the house,” he said. “The real hero, if you ask me, is my wife.”

Maj. Ariza will leave again for Afghanistan later this year. He said despite his frequent trips away from home he finds his job personally gratifying.

“I truly believe we are pioneers in what we’re doing — we’re changing the way we’ve done medicine in the battlefields since World War II,” he said.

MC4 has provided more than 12,000 systems to 250 deployed medical units.

“It’s a challenge, but there are a lot of good people, and it makes my job extremely easy,” Maj. Ariza said. “I received the medal on behalf of every member of MC4. They work very hard to get it right.”